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Photo by Kaitlin Abeele

Eric Coulas of Barry's Bay, Ont., races across Crowe Lake on Saturday at the fourth annual Marmora Fire Fighters Association Snowmobile Drag Race. Coulas finished last in both his races, but still enjoyed the day on the lake with his wife and friends. "My pit crew, they do a good job for me. And I let them down," said Coulas. "Sometimes it's a race, and sometimes it's a drag."

Gusty weekend on Crowe Lake

Annual snowmobile races have less than ideal conditions for racers and spectators

By Kaitlin Abeele

Gushing winds matched the speeds of the snowmobiles as they charged across Crowe Lake at the fourth annual Marmora Fire Fighters Association Snowmobile Drag Races.

Wind gusts up to 74 km/h and melting ice and snow created less than ideal conditions for the races on Feb. 22. Organizers had to drain large pools

of water along the track and weigh down the starting lights after the stand was blown over before the race.

Racers and spectators treaded carefully across the lake, slipping and sliding along the ice as the wind pushed back with every step.

"It's actually affecting some of the sleds. It wants to pull them," said Stephen Brownson, an organizer for the event.

Many spectators were deterred by the weather, wondering if the event would still take place after rain and warmer weather started to thin the ice.

"We have a good turnout of racers. Last year we had a few more spectators, but with the rain, people are a little down," said Brownson.

Mike Gaebel, a resident of Marmora, Ont., chose to brave the elements.

"I've been coming for a few years now, but it wasn't as wet," said Gaebel. "But you've got to put up with the weather, it's here. Despite the cold, you just get warm for it and enjoy."

Eric Coulas, of Barry's Bay, Ont. competed in two of 36 races held throughout the day.

"I'm legal in the 0-500, then I'm jumping a class to the 500-600. And I don't want to go any higher because you see how stuff goes quick here, I can never keep up," said Coulas.

His pit crew worked quickly to refuel the sled in the five minutes between each of his runs. Each race uses almost a full tank of high octane racing fuel,

which means the sport can become quite expensive.

Coulas became interested in racing as a young man, riding motorcycles on ice rings. But it became too dangerous, and he switched to drag races on snowmobiles.

"I'm too old to go around in circles," said Coulas with a laugh. His wife chimed in, "You'd get too dizzy now."

Coulas finished last in both of his races, and felt disappointment at letting down his pit crew. Regardless, he still enjoyed the day on the lake with his wife and friends, munching on a cold cheeseburger and sipping a beer after his final race.

"Sometimes it's a race and sometimes it's a drag," said Coulas.

Local documentary filmmakers share their best at kickoff

By Mitch Ward

Local documentary filmmakers were given the chance to build some hype about their latest features yesterday evening.

Downtown DocFest, Belleville's now annual documentary festival, kicked off by holding Trailerfest, an evening pre-

viewing trailers for documentaries from the upcoming film festival, that runs from Feb. 28 to March 2.

Organizers gave local filmmakers the most attention at the event, giving them the opportunity to introduce their trailers to the assembled audience upstairs at the Belleville public library.

The festival's lineup includes 16 locally-made films, out of a total of 52 documentaries to be screened, with a mix of shorts and feature length pieces.

Belleville residents Adam and Andrew Gray introduced the trailer for their first feature length film, *Fly Colt Fly: The Legend of the Barefoot Bandit*, a chronicle of

the exploits of Colton Harris-Moore, an American teenager who was a high profile fugitive for almost three years.

Andrew Gray summed up why they chose to do a film about Harris-Moore "In a nutshell, just because it's cool. He's a really interesting character. People were really excited to talk about him. It was just

a good story we wanted to share."

The brothers have made 10 shorter documentaries so far, mostly for television, but their first feature was three years in the making.

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Photo by Justin Chin

A CN freight train passes through Belleville earlier this week. According to the Transportation Safety Board, an average of 1,128 railway accidents have happened per year between 2007 and 2011, with an average of 686 derailments per year. Of these, 105 derailments on average involve dangerous goods.

Emergency disaster plan in the works

Recent reports of multiple train derailments spark need for planning

By Justin Chin

The county's emergency services co-ordinator says he plans to approach rail companies and other parties in the near future to prepare for a possible derailment in Hastings County.

With the recent reports of multiple train derailments across the country, it has sparked John O'Donnell, the community emergency management coordinator and acting chief of Hastings County's Emergency Medical Service, to revisit the Hastings County's emergency response plan with the Hastings-Quinte emer-

gency services committee and the county council.

"We are ready," said O'Donnell. "In light of all these train derailments and disasters that have occurred in Canada in the last few months, maybe we should be a little proactive and look at if there's something we can do working with all the partners," O'Donnell said.

According to the Transportation Safety Board, an average of 1,128 railway accidents happened per year between 2007 and 2011, with an average of 686 derailments per year. Of these, 105 derailments on average involved dangerous goods.

A dozen trains pass by Belleville and Hastings County every day, some tracks running along the backyards of homes, and a derailment would be disastrous for the community.

There is an emergency plan in place

and "we will deal with it, (if an accident were to happen tomorrow)," said O'Donnell.

Paramedics, police and firefighters will work together and solve the problem, he said.

The last train derailment with which the county dealt occurred on Feb. 21, 2003 in Tyendinaga Township, where a petroleum gas tank exploded and caused 300 residents to be evacuated, with 19 people injured. The fire burned for three days.

"You can't predict everything that would happen but we are trained to deal with emergencies. We have been dealing with multi-casualties incidents on Highway 401 (in the) last couple of weeks," said O'Donnell.

"If the emergencies come up, we will deal with them. That's why we have an

emergency plan in place."

Currently, there are 13 staffed ambulances that are continuously on the road and serving Hastings and Prince Edward Counties.

A deployment plan will be in effect and will call upon neighbouring counties, such as Lennox and Addington County or Northumberland, for more resources if required to help address the situation effectively. Additional help from Napanee can arrive within 20 minutes depending on where the resources are.

According to the deployment plan, lower-priority calls, such as nursing home to hospital transport, will be put on hold until the calls are completed.

"I don't think there's anything missing (from the current plan), but we live and learn," said O'Donnell. "The plans have been in place for many years."

The plan is revisited annually and

small adjustments are made after those evaluations. O'Donnell said he did not recall the last time a big adjustment was made to the plan.

"We haven't seen tornado warnings 20 years ago, but we are seeing tornado warnings a lot more," he said. "Maybe these have to take a lot more precedence on our plan. It's a work in progress all the time."

"We are pretty well prepared, but when you have these Lac-Mégantic pop up, you start to think, 'That could be Quinte West or the City of Belleville,'" said O'Donnell. "Let's get everybody together and provide information and make sure we can protect our citizens the best we can."

The Lac-Mégantic derailment took 47 lives on July 6, 2013 when a freight train carrying crude oil derailed and exploded.

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DocFest...

Continued from Page 1

"It took about a year to get financing, and then two years of shooting, and doing the editing and doing the animation," said Adam Gray.

Close to half a dozen other local directors were on hand to talk briefly about their submissions.

The co-chair of the festival, Gary Magwood, hosted the event, now in its third year.

Magwood explained some of the lessons the committee has learned from past years to improve this year's festival.

"You need more volunteers than we thought. We changed scheduling a bit because, although the films run consecutively, we've tried to offset them a bit, so that folks can see the beginning. If they don't like it they can step to the next one. And mostly just how to make things flow."

The audience of around 50 people, crammed neatly into a third floor meeting room, was comprised of the public, documentary filmmakers, local media, and festival volunteers, wearing black Doc Fest T-shirts.

For the volunteers, working at the festival will likely involve very little documentary watching, as Magwood explained.

"Most of the time, myself, and anyone with the black shirts, will be doing a lot of running around — the Doc Fest shuffle."



Gary Magwood, co-chair of Belleville Downtown DocFest, speaks at the festival's Trailerfest, while co-chair Heather Muir looks on. The evening introduced trailers for the films to be screened at this year's festival.

Photo by Mitch Ward

Coyotes taking up residence

Sightings and problems in residential areas a result of growing population

By Dayna Lefebvre

Coyotes continue to be a nuisance in Belleville and the surrounding area, causing some people to fear for their pet's safety — and their own.

According to the Ministry of Natural Resources, coyote populations have been on the rise since 2000 in Ontario. Although there are no hard numbers on the population, the sightings and problems of coyotes in residential areas have been increasing.

Bonnie Bowness and her neighbours in Trenton have spent the last three months with a lone coyote living in their backyards. Because he is nearly as large as her great dane, they believe it might be a wolf-coyote hybrid, which are not uncommon.

Coyotes generally pose little threat to humans, but that doesn't stop them from intimidating people in residential areas.

"I've lived here my whole life," explained Bowness. "We used to see an animal maybe once a month — a deer, a fox, or a coyote. Now it's every day."

"It's really bad. I haven't been able to go out with the dogs," said Bowness. Before the coyote began to hang around, Bowness and her neighbours would walk their dogs up to twice a day. Now the dogs are too scared to leave the house.

"They've been going to the bathroom inside. It's been a bad winter," she explained.

When the coyote first appeared, it was healthy looking

and didn't stick around very long. More recently, it has had patches of fur missing and has become braver.

"He's not afraid of anything, and he comes really close. I've never been scared before with stuff like this. I am now. He's very brave," Bowness said.

The coyote comes into their backyards and will watch them through the windows. Multiple times there have been tracks leading around their cars and up onto the doorstep.

Although no pets have been injured, it's been stressful for the neighbourhood.

Bowness believes subdivision construction in the area is responsible for the increase in residential coyote encounters. The subdivision was previously home to acres of woods.

"These poor babies are homeless," she explained. "It's not his fault. He doesn't know where his next meal is. I feel bad for him, but he scares us."

"He's out there all the time. He watches every move, and it leaves you stuck. We don't know what to do," Bowness said, adding that unless the coyote hurts someone, she doesn't think animal control is likely to do anything.

Jeff Weese, a registered hunter from Belleville, agrees. "They help control the feral cat and dog populations, especially in a residential area. Unless they become a direct danger, people don't want to step in."

Coyote sightings even in downtown Belleville have become a more common occurrence, with one spotted on Bell Boulevard earlier this month.

"They're opportunistic," explained Weese. Opportunistic feeders will eat anything from fresh meat to carrion, vegetables and even garbage. "They usually eat small animals, but a harsh winter can make it more difficult."

He added that in cities like Trenton and Belleville

there are cats, dogs and even chickens, all of which are perfect opportunities for a coyote.

"Don't set an environment for them," Weese said. "If you're feeding them, even unintentionally, they will come back. Keep your garbage inside, keep your pets inside."

Weese explains that this winter he has had plenty of encounters with coyotes in residential Belleville, including a pack of six near Taste of Country on Roblin Road, and a lone coyote early in the morning walking towards town on Sidney Street.

Coyotes are generally pack animals, excluding mating season.

"A lone coyote, especially a male, is more dangerous — and more desperate. Being alone usually means something is wrong with them," explained Weese. "Usually they are aggressive or a trouble maker, something the pack didn't want."

Although coyotes are less likely to carry rabies than other animals such as foxes, the spread of mange, worms and other parasites are a concern, especially in a residential area where pets and children can be exposed to waste from the animal.

Generally coyotes are timid creatures and will run if confronted, but if they are desperate enough, they can pose a threat to children and pets.

"Usually if you yell at them to get back in the woods, they will," Weese explained. "If you have one that won't back down, make a lot of noise. Maintain eye contact, back away slowly, and get somewhere safe."

Despite the growing populations, attacks on people are incredibly rare, with only one fatality on record in Canada.

People are encouraged to report coyote sightings to the police or animal control.

Derailment...

Continued from Page 1

"We are as ready as we can be," said Susan Rowe, director of communications of Quinte Health Care.

There are currently multiple plans in place in case there's a large-scale incident, the hospitals can work well with their partners and respond accordingly. Those plans are revisited annually or biannually depending on the plan.

If a mass casualty event were to happen, the hospitals would be placed on "Code Orange", which means expect mass casualties intake.

The recent "Code Orange" was declared when QHC received notice from Ontario Provincial Police that there may be more than 100 casualties from a pile up from Highway 401 last January, she said.

"We made sure that our in patient team, intensive care, labs and other personnel were in the hospital and ready to deal with whoever comes through the door."

Quinte Health Care regularly runs mock situations with other provincial and municipal emergency services, she said. The last "Code Orange" mock exercise was simulated two years ago in conjunction with the municipal emergency services.

"No one wants these things to happen but we are prepared," Rowe said.

Student president devotes free time to job

Meetings and ceremonies all part of a day's work for Chantel Johnston

By Solana Cain

Chantel Johnston didn't know exactly what she was getting herself into, but she signed up to do it again — even if that means reading emails into the night.

"I seem to strive on being stressed," said Johnston, Loyalist's current student government president. "I seem to like it. I crave it I guess," she said.

As required of the student president, Johnston attends committee meetings, executive meetings, biweekly board meetings, award ceremonies, works box office at pub nights, and makes herself available to students by walking around the cafeteria at lunch, having an open door policy for the office and replying to a constant stream of emails.

"I expected a big role but I didn't expect it to be as big as it really is," said Johnston, who says all of her free time on campus is devoted to student government.

"I did not understand really how much of a role the student government president actually plays within the college," she said.

One of the board's biggest accomplishments this term was the renovation done to the cafeteria.

"It adds so much more to Loyalist, especially with the administration area recently being redone and the main entrance," said Johnston.

Despite the mounting work, Johnston is running again for student president in the upcoming elections. If she wins, this will be her third consecutive year on the board as she enters her third year as a full-time student in her business administration.

Voting begins online next week for new student government representation.

"Online voting has been in place for several years which makes it very convenient for students," said Nancy Simpson, student government office manager.



Loyalist College Student Government President Chantel Johnston is running again in the upcoming spring elections for a second term as president. The second-year business administrative student has been in student politics since elementary school.

Photo by Solana Cain

There are also cash incentives to voters — \$500 to be split between two students — as voting apathy has been a problem in the past.

Johnston ended up running for president unopposed last fall after the only other candidate withdrew their name from the running.

This year, Paul Hamilton, first-year police foundations student, is running against Johnston in the election.

Current vice-president Ashley Porlier will be graduating from the human resources management one-year certificate program this spring leaving her seat vacant.

For the three students vying for her position, Porlier says, "I think that the incoming vice president would do very well to try to get counsel on board with whatever project they want to do."

A highlight for Porlier is the develop-

ment and creation of a domestic violence visual resource tool. In conjunction with the mental health services, and Sarah Ogden, mind and wellness practitioner at Loyalist, the visual tool akin to a traffic light was designed to help students identify domestic violence warning signs in their relationships.

The visual aid was disseminated inside the What's Happening Loyalist College winter 2014 magazine available in every

student space on campus.

"I really believe that this particular role needs some projects to accomplish because so many of the media responsibilities or interviews that are given, are done by the president, pretty much exclusively. So in order to make sure you're really providing value, the vice president should take the lead on projects the students want to see," she said.

The candidates for vice president are Andrew Chapman, first-year civil engineering technician student, Jasmine Chapman, first-year radio broadcasting student and Mary-Ellen Morris, second-year developmental service worker student.

To run for a student government position, you must be a full-time student, who has paid their tuition and has a 60 per cent average in the previous semester, with no failures and no incompletes.

Simpson said a successful student government is a team willing to "put aside their personal preferences to focus on other students' opinions and work together to make improvements to benefit current and future students."

The remaining positions are for class leaders.

First-year nursing students Maria Clemente and Darrin Morgan are running for health sciences leader.

First years Vanessa Henry, Michelle Macland and Joshua Robertson DeLarge are running for justice studies leader.

Second-year students Brittany Downie and Samantha Jackson are running for media, arts & design leader.

Second-year chemical engineering technician student Tim Lucas is running unopposed for applied sciences, skills & technology leader.

First-year business administration student Nichole Howson is running unopposed for business & management studies leader.

Destiny Tucker, first-year developmental service worker, is running unopposed for human studies leader.

Students can vote from March 4 — 6 at LoyalistLife.com.



Photo by Guillaume Nolet

Supporters react as Brienne Jenner scores Canada's first goal during the women's gold medal game, making it a one-goal game with less than four minutes to go in the third period. Close to 50 people had gathered at JAKK Tuesdays Sports Pub in Kingston to cheer on Kingston native Jayna Hefford last Thursday during the women's hockey gold medal win against the United States.

Team Canada strikes gold

By Guillaume Nolet

No hockey fan would have predicted such a fairy-tale ending as the one witnessed last Thursday between one of the most intense rivalries in women's hockey.

Of the millions of hockey supporters watching the game, none were on the edge of their seats more than friends and family of Kingstonian Jayna Hefford, centre for the women's Canadian team, who gathered at JAKK Tuesdays Sports Pub in Kingston to watch it all unfold.

Close to 50 supporters of Hefford and fellow Kingstonian Geneviève Lacasse, third goalie, were present to watch the historical match. The Canadian women came back from a two-point deficit late in the third period to tie the game and win in overtime to defend their fourth Olympic gold title.

"This game was a typical Canada-U.S.A. game," said Beth Duff, who coached Hefford in her debut in the minor leagues.

"Both teams are talented. Both teams possess a great passion for hockey. Both teams have the drive and desire to win that gold medal," said Duff, who also organized the event.

The first 20 minutes of the game were spent time in the penalty box and no player made it onto the scoreboard.

Two of the biggest Hefford supporters in the crowd were her mother, Sandra, and former teammate Carolyn Nugent, both wearing their red and white Canadian jerseys.

"After the second period, I thought the U.S. team had the control. Canada needed to take more shots on goal, and less penalties," said Nugent, who played with Hefford in 1996 with the Kingston Kodiaks.

"A nice blend of players is what makes the Canadian team so strong. A mix of young players like (Meghan) Acosta-Marciano, (Charline) Labonté and (Marie-Philip) Poulin and very experienced players like (Caroline) Ouellette, (Jayna) Hefford and (Hayley) Wickenheiser makes Team Canada so unique," added Nugent.

The place went crazy with flags waving and arms in the air as supporters celebrated after the goal by Marie-Philip Poulin which tied the game with less than a minute to go in regulation time.

"You could see the spirits on the Canadian team lift, knowing that all they needed was a goal," said Duff, who said she always believed the girls would never give up.

A storybook ending, the golden goal, scored by Poulin in overtime, gave Canada its fourth gold medal since the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City.

"The players on Team Canada never gave up and they all have that never-say-die attitude," said Duff.

Hefford's mother said she felt a bit nostalgic about the Sochi game.

"I decided not to go to cheer her on at the Olympics for different reasons, so there is a bit of nostalgia now that it is over," said Hefford.

Since her first Olympics back in 1998, when Canada brought home a silver medal from Nagano, Japan, Hefford has helped popularize girls' hockey not only in Kingston but also all over Canada.

Fans and supporters eyes were glued to the screen during the medal ceremony. When the Kingston native was shown on the big screen receiving her medal, the crowd burst into a wave of cheers and applause.

Hefford, who will be 40-years-old at the next winter games in Pyeongchang, South Korea, still has not yet discussed her future career plans.

"Jayna will have the final say, and she has not yet decided," said her proud mother.

"There's still a chance she might be playing in four years. She loves training as much as playing," added Hefford.

"It just felt like such a common bond, that we were wishing and hoping together, as a group, for the best for Jayna and her teammates," said former coach Duff.

"We were able to erupt in a huge cheer, all as one, when that golden goal was scored. It is a time that we'll never forget and never forget who we were with," she said.



(Above) From left, Heather Douglas, Sandra Hefford, Carolyn Nugent and Lisa Duff Dunkelberg celebrate after Team Canada ties the game against the United States when Poulin scored Canada's second goal in regulation time with less than a minute to go in the third period.

Photo by Guillaume Nolet

(Left) Murray MacDonald, Bill Ritske and Joni Hopkins celebrate Canada's 1-0 win over the U.S. in the men's hockey semi-final game on Feb. 21 at Dem Bones in Belleville.

Photo by Alistair Maitland